

Serial No. 10/082,303

ASA-1068

Remarks

Pending Claims

Applicants have canceled claims 1-4, 6-12, 14-20, 23 and 24 without prejudice or disclaimer. Accordingly, claims 5, 13, 21 and 25-27 are pending.

Priority

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication that the certified priority documents have been received.

35 U.S.C. §102 and §103

Applicants have canceled the claims rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and 103(a) without admitting to the propriety of the rejections. Accordingly, these rejections are rendered moot.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants have amended claims 5, 13 and 21 in independent form to include the limitations of the respective base claims and intervening claims.

Accordingly, each of these claims should now be allowed.

Serial No. 10/082,303

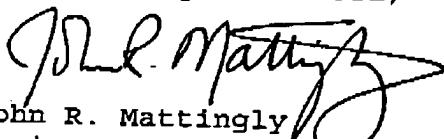
ASA-1068

Claims 25, 26 and 27 have been allowed. Although claims 25, 26 and 27 were presented in the amendment filed February 18, 2004 as claims that corresponded to claims 5, 13 and 21, claims 25-27 are different from claims 5, 13 and 21 as amended in the present amendment. In particular, claims 4, 12 and 17 were further amended in the amendment filed February 18, 2004 to include additional limitations that do not appear in claims 25-27. Accordingly, the claims are different from one another.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, reconsideration and reexamination are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

  
John R. Mattingly  
Registration No. 30,293  
Attorney for Applicants

MATTINGLY, STANGER & MALUR  
1800 Diagonal Rd., Suite 370  
Alexandria, Virginia 22314  
(703) 684-1120  
Date: December 29, 2004